

HIS GRAVE UNMARKED.

Prof. Proctor, the Astronomer, Lies in Greenwood as "Lot 5,928."

The body of the astronomer Prof. Richard A. Proctor now lies in a neglected grave in Greenwood Cemetery, and Miss Mary Proctor, his daughter, it is said, is trying to raise funds to purchase a suitable lot and monument. She is the oldest daughter of Prof. Proctor and her home is in St. Joseph, Mo.

When Prof. Proctor was alive, wherever the English language is spoken he was known and honored by men of science as one of the foremost of their number. His writings had been translated into other languages, and in the universities of Europe were standard works. When he died he was buried in a borrowed grave, which is unmarked and neglected.

On the books of the undertaker who buried him his name stands opposite "Lot 5,928, Greenwood," and beyond that there is no record. The lot belongs to the undertaker, who allowed the dead astronomer to be buried there until "other arrangements" could be made. None have been made, and the grave, a little to the west of Central Avenue in Greenwood, is sunken and lost in the midst of the costly monuments and works of the gardeners which are all about it.

Prof. Proctor died on Sept. 12, 1888, at Willard Parker Hospital, Sixteenth Street and East River, of yellow fever. He had come from Florida two or three days before, and was stricken at the Westminster Hotel. His family was away, and, from the nature of the disease, could not attend his funeral. For the same reason it was thought unwise to send the body to his old home in England or to his adopted one in St. Joseph for burial. Stephen Merritt, the undertaker who had charge of the funeral, owned a vacant lot in Greenwood Cemetery, and he loaned a grave to meet the emergency. The spot is an out-of-the-way one, seldom visited, and unknown, except as it is pointed out on the map of the cemetery, even to the dead scientist's own children.

At times men who have known the story have suggested that a suitable burial place be given Prof. Proctor's remains, but no suggestion of a burial place has been offered and nothing has been done. It has, at times, been suggested, too, that at least a stone be put up bearing the name of the scientist, to mark the the spot, but that suggestion has not been carried out, and until the present time the family, so far as the public knows, has made no direct attempt to secure a suitable grave and erect a monument.

Few scientific men stood in higher esteem as such than Prof. Proctor. He was born in Chelsea, England, in 1837, and after a university training devoted his life to the study of astronomy. His investigations covered a wide field. He wrote profusely and prosecuted his original research along many lines. Among other pieces of original work was the computation of the period of rotation of Mars. He contributed valuable results to science from his observations of the transits of Venus, and he devoted several volumes to his study of the sun.

Prof. Proctor first became personally known in America in 1873, when he delivered a series of lectures on astronomical topics. In 1875 he again came to the United States for another course of lectures, and since that time, until he died, he was more on this side of the ocean than in Europe.

In 1880, while on a lecturing tour, he stopped for a short time in Missouri, and while there met Mrs. Sallie Crowley, who afterward became his wife. For a time he made his home in this city. In 1888 he had been in Oak Lawn, Fla., and came to this city directly from that place, where he had contracted the disease from which he died.